

We Claim:

1. A flexible fluid containment vessel for the transportation and/or containment of cargo comprising a fluid or fluidisable material, said vessel comprising:

an elongated flexible tubular structure comprised of fabric having a first side and a second side;

said tubular structure having a front end and a rear end;

means for sealing said front end and said rear end;

means for filling and emptying said vessel of cargo; and

means for rendering said tubular structure impervious comprising forming said fabric out of yarns or fibers having a thermoplastic coating wherein said first side is formed predominantly out of yarns or fibers having a first thermoplastic coating and said second side is formed predominantly out of yarns or fibers having a second thermoplastic coating which is different from the first thermoplastic coating and causing the thermoplastic coatings to fill voids between the yarns or fibers to render the coated fabric impervious.

2. The vessel in accordance with claim 1 wherein said fabric is woven and said first and second side are formed by stitching points.

3. The vessel in accordance with claim 1 wherein said thermoplastic coating is subject to heat,

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pressure or both to cause it to flow and fill the voids.

4. The vessel in accordance with claim 1 wherein said first thermoplastic coating and said second thermoplastic coating are taken from the group consisting essentially of urethane, polyester, polyamide, polyvinyl chloride, polyolefin or other suitable thermoplastic material.

5. A flexible fluid containment vessel for the transportation and/or containment of cargo comprising a fluid or fluidisable material, said vessel comprising:

an elongated flexible tubular structure comprised of fabric;

said tubular structure having a front end and a rear end;

means for sealing said front end and said rear end;

means for filling and emptying said vessel of cargo; and

means for rendering said tubular structure impervious and buoyant comprising coating said fabric with a coating having microspheres therein in a sufficient amount that the overall density of the coated fabric is less than approximately 1.0 g/cm^3 .

6. The vessel in accordance with claim 5 wherein said coating is taken from the group consisting essentially of: polyvinyl chloride, polyurethanes, synthetic and natural rubbers, polyureas,

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polyolefins, silicone polymers, acrylic polymers or foam derivatives thereof.

5 7. The vessel in accordance with claim 5 wherein said coating is a thermoplastic or thermoset material.

8. A flexible fluid containment vessel for the transportation and/or containment of cargo comprising a fluid or fluidisable material, said vessel comprising:
an elongated flexible tubular structure comprised of fabric;
said tubular structure having a front end and a rear end;
means for sealing said front end and said rear end;
means for filling and emptying said vessel of cargo; and
20 means for rendering said tubular structure impervious and buoyant comprising coating said fabric with a coating having a gas or entrained air in the coating such that the gas or air is trapped within the coating in a sufficient amount that the overall density of the coated fabric is less than
25 approximately 1.0 g/cm³.

9. The vessel in accordance with claim 8 wherein the coating is applied to the fabric by spraying or
30 in the form of a foam.

10. The vessel in accordance with claim 8 wherein said coating is taken from the group consisting

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essentially of: polyvinyl chloride, polyurethanes, synthetic and natural rubbers, polyureas, polyolefins, silicone polymers, acrylic polymers or foam derivatives thereof.

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11. The vessel in accordance with claim 10 wherein said coating is a thermoplastic or thermoset material.

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